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# TableBuilder: Labour Force Survey

Enables detailed analysis of the social and economic aspects of labour market engagement over time

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## About the dataset

This release provides information about the TableBuilder product based on data from the monthly Labour Force Survey (LFS).

In the latest release data is available from August 2006 to January 2026.

### Modernising the Labour Force Survey

This will be the last regular release before changes to the Labour Force Survey are implemented. LFS TableBuilder releases will be paused until after the Labour Force Survey modernisation program is complete.

The ABS is improving how we collect the Labour Force Survey so we can continue producing high-quality labour force statistics, maintain strong response rates, provide a better experience for respondents, and run our business more efficiently.

For further details on these plans, see [Modernising the Labour Force Survey \(/about/key-priorities/data-acquisition-modernisation-program/modernising-labour-force-survey\)](#).

The monthly LFS provides information about the labour market activity of Australia's resident civilian population aged 15 years and over. The LFS is designed to provide estimates of employment and unemployment primarily for the whole of Australia and, secondarily, for each state and territory.

The LFS also provides detailed statistics on the labour force. This includes information on people who are:

- Employed, such as hours worked and underutilisation
- Unemployed, such as duration of job search and time since they last worked
- Not in the labour force, such as reasons they are not in the labour force and whether they are looking for work.

Socio-demographic information is also included.

Some information, including industry, occupation, job duration, and retrenchment, is only available in the mid-quarter months (i.e. February, May, August and November).

## Accessing the data

The LFS provides monthly statistics about the labour market participation of the Australian population. Currently, LFS data are available in five formats:

- Headline estimates and summary results in the main publications: [Labour Force, Australia \(/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia/latest-release\)](#) and [Labour Force, Detailed, Australia \(/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia-detailed/latest-release\)](#)
- Selected tables in [Data Explorer \(/about/data-services/data-explorer\)](#)
- A longitudinal microdata product in [DataLab \(/statistics/microdata-tablebuilder/available-microdata-tablebuilder/longitudinal-labour-force-australia\)](#)
- Produce your own custom tables in TableBuilder
- A microdata product integrated into the [Person Level Integrated Data Asset \(/statistics/understanding-statistics/guide-labour-statistics/labour-force-survey-products-and-data-item-guide/labour-force-survey-plida-linked-microdata-product\)](#)

[Compare data services \(/about/data-services/compare-data-services\)](#) to see what's right for you or [apply for access \(/statistics/microdata-tablebuilder/tablebuilder#how-to-access\)](#).

## How TableBuilder fits in with other Labour Force Survey products

The [Labour Force, Australia \(/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia/latest-release\)](#) and [Labour Force, Detailed, Australia \(/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia-detailed/latest-release\)](#) publications are the primary source of headline labour market estimates at national and state and territory levels.

The TableBuilder product allows you to customize and save your own tables using LFS data, and it provides the combined monthly and quarterly data together.

TableBuilder has small differences in aggregated estimates compared to the monthly publication. This has minimal impact on the underlying patterns of the data.

For more information, see our [Product Guide \(/statistics/understanding-statistics/guide-labour-statistics/labour-force-survey-products-and-data-item-guide\)](#).

## Applying for access

To apply for access to TableBuilder, register and apply in [Microdata Entry Page \(/statistics/microdata-tablebuilder/long-your-accounts\)](#).

Further information on access steps can be found in [How to Apply for TableBuilder \(/statistics/microdata-tablebuilder/tablebuilder#how-to-access\)](#) on the ABS website.

## Support

General information about the LFS including methodology and other information can be accessed from the [Labour Force, Australia \(/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia/latest-release\)](#) publication.

For further support in the use of this product, please contact [Microdata Access Strategies \(/about/contact-us\)](#) on 1300 135 070 or via [microdata.access@abs.gov.au \(mailto:microdata.access@abs.gov.au\)](mailto:microdata.access@abs.gov.au).

## Privacy

The [ABS Privacy Policy \(/about/legislation-and-policy/privacy/privacy-abs\)](#) outlines how the ABS handles any personal information that you provide to us.

## Using TableBuilder

For general information relating to TableBuilder or instructions on how to use features of the TableBuilder product, please refer to the [TableBuilder \(/statistics/microdata-tablebuilder/tablebuilder\)](#) information page.

### Available data

The LFS TableBuilder product includes monthly information on:

- Labour force status - employed, unemployed, not in the labour force
- For people in the labour force - unemployment rate, underemployment rate, participation rate
- For employed people - status in employment, full-time or part-time status, hours actually worked, hours usually worked, duration of employment, expectations of future employment, underemployment, reason for working fewer hours than usual in the reference week. See [Hours worked guide \(/statistics/understanding-statistics/guide-labour-statistics/hours-worked-guide\)](#).
- For unemployed people - whether looked for full-time and/or part-time work, duration of job search, and whether active steps taken to find work
- For people not in the labour force - reason not in the labour force, whether looking for work
- Socio-demographic information - sex, age, social marital status, relationship in household, family type, participation in school and tertiary education, highest year of school completed, level of highest educational attainment, birthplace and year of arrival in Australia
- Geography/Region (of usual residence) - state or territory, capital city / balance of state, and labour force regions (Statistical Area Level 4 (SA4)). See [Regional labour market data guide \(/statistics/understanding-statistics/guide-labour-statistics/regional-labour-market-data-guide\)](#).

Quarterly information is available on:

- For people in the labour force - retrenchments in the previous quarter
- For employed people - occupation, industry, and whether casual (i.e. employee without paid leave entitlements). See [Industry employment guide \(/statistics/understanding-statistics/guide-labour-statistics/industry-employment-guide\)](#)
- For unemployed people - whether looked for full-time and/or part-time work, reason for ceasing last job, and industry and occupation of last job
- For people not in the labour force - retrenchments in the previous quarter.

For information on the concepts and data items collected in the LFS, see the [data item guide \(/statistics/understanding-statistics/guide-labour-statistics/labour-force-survey-products-and-data-item-guide/labour-force-survey-concepts-and-data-item-guide\)](#).

Data is available monthly from August 2006. Caution should be applied when comparing monthly data with quarterly data.

### Guidance on using Regional (Statistical Area Level 4 (SA4)) data

In TableBuilder, regional LFS estimates are produced directly from the survey responses. As these regional estimates are based on smaller sample sizes in each region, they are of a lower level of statistical quality compared to those produced at the national and state and territory levels.

While the ABS recommends using the modelled estimates whenever possible (see [Regional labour market data guide \(/statistics/understanding-statistics/guide-labour-statistics/regional-labour-market-data-guide\)](#) for more

information), analysis using direct survey estimates in LFS TableBuilder are still possible.

When using the direct survey estimates in LFS TableBuilder, the ABS recommends using (moving) annual averages. For more information see [Advice on Reporting Regional Labour Force Data \(https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs%40.nsf/Previousproducts/6291.0.55.001Main%20Features4Jan%202018?opendocument&tabname=Summary&pro dno=6291.0.55.001&issue=Jan%202018&num=&view=\).](https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs%40.nsf/Previousproducts/6291.0.55.001Main%20Features4Jan%202018?opendocument&tabname=Summary&pro dno=6291.0.55.001&issue=Jan%202018&num=&view=).)

## Using TableBuilder to calculate Labour Force measures

Below is a table explaining how to calculate certain Labour Force measures using variables found in TableBuilder.

Due to perturbation and other factors, calculated measures will differ from the summary estimates in main publications.

### How to calculate Labour Force measures

| Measure                                 | Unemployment Rate                                                                                                                                         | Participation Rate                                                                            | Employment to Populatio<br>n Ratio                                                                    | Underemployment Rate                                                                       |
|-----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Definition/s                            | The number of unemployed persons expressed as a percentage of the labour force. Labour Force is the sum of the number of employed and unemployed persons. | The labour force expressed as a percentage of the civilian population aged 15 years and over. | The number of employed persons expressed as a percentage of the civilian population in the same group | The number of underemployed workers, expressed as a percentage of the labour force.        |
| When to use                             | A key indicator of underutilised labour and performance of the economy.                                                                                   | Understand labour supply trends relative to overall population growth.                        | To understand changes in number of employed relative to overall population growth.                    | Identify potentially hidden 'spare capacity' in labour market.                             |
| Variables to select in Tabl<br>eBuilder | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Unemployed</li><li>Labour Force</li></ul>                                                                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Labour Force</li><li>Civilian Population</li></ul>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Employed</li><li>Civilian Population</li></ul>                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Underemployed Workers</li><li>Labour Force</li></ul> |
| Formula                                 | $\frac{\text{Unemployed people}}{\text{Labour Force}} \times 100$                                                                                         | $\frac{\text{Labour Force}}{\text{Civilian Population}} \times 100$                           | $\frac{\text{Employed persons}}{\text{Civilian Population}} \times 100$                               | $\frac{\text{Underemployed workers}}{\text{Labour Force}} \times 100$                      |
| Example (as data downloa<br>d)          | see below file TB calculation example.xlsx                                                                                                                |                                                                                               |                                                                                                       | see below file TB calculation example - Underemployment.xlsx                               |

### Labour Force calculation examples

[Download all \(100.57 KB\)](#)

Below are examples of how to calculate Labour Force measures using tables downloaded from TableBuilder.

#### TB calculation examples.xlsx

[Download XLSX](#)

[54.51 KB]

[\(/statistics/microdata-tablebuilder/available-microdata-tablebuilder/labour-force-survey/TB%20calculation%20examples.xlsx\)]((/statistics/microdata-tablebuilder/available-microdata-tablebuilder/labour-force-survey/TB%20calculation%20examples.xlsx))

#### TB calculation example - Underemployment.xlsx

[Download XLSX](#)

[56.9 KB]

[\(/statistics/microdata-tablebuilder/available-microdata-tablebuilder/labour-force-survey/TB%20calculation%20example%20-%20Underemployment.xlsx\)]((/statistics/microdata-tablebuilder/available-microdata-tablebuilder/labour-force-survey/TB%20calculation%20example%20-%20Underemployment.xlsx))

## Information on methods

For general information on the methodology used in the Labour Force Survey, see [Labour Force, Australia methodology \(/methodologies/labour-force-australia-methodology\).]((/methodologies/labour-force-australia-methodology))

The Labour Force, Australia and Labour Force, Detailed, Australia publications continue to be the primary source of summary labour market estimates.

The LFS TableBuilder is based on the [Longitudinal Labour Force \(/statistics/microdata-tablebuilder/available-microdata-tablebuilder/longitudinal-labour-force-australia\)](#) microdata product which includes a sample of modelled records. This results in a slight difference in aggregated estimates for both TableBuilder and microdata datasets when compared to the main publications. In addition, the TableBuilder is subject to confidentiality restrictions before data is released.

For more information on the modelled records see our [Product Guide \(/statistics/understanding-statistics/guide-labour-statistics/labour-force-survey-products-guide#differences-in-estimates\)](#).

## Estimates and Sampling Errors

The estimates in the LFS are based on the sample of the population measured, rather than an attempt to measure the full population. As a result, estimates are subject to sampling variability.

Analysis undertaken on LFS estimates should incorporate appropriate quality measures which are available in the form of Relative Standard Errors (RSEs). The RSE is the expression of the standard error as a percentage of the estimate. There are about two chances in three that a sample estimate will differ by less than one standard error from the figure that would have been obtained if all dwellings had been included in the survey, and about nineteen chances in twenty that the difference will be less than two standard errors.

For further information on RSEs in TableBuilder see [Confidentiality and relative standard error \(/statistics/microdata-tablebuilder/tablebuilder/confidentiality-and-relative-standard-error\)](#).

## Weighting and Population Benchmarks

Individual survey responses are assigned weights to ensure they add to independent estimates of the civilian population aged 15 years and over, known as population benchmarks. The population benchmarks are revised quarterly, in mid-quarter months, to reflect the most recent Estimated Resident Population (ERP) data and these updates do cause minor revisions to the LFS estimates.

The TableBuilder product uses the [December 2025 population benchmarks \(/methodologies/labour-force-australia-methodology/dec-2025\)](#) as this aligns with the latest time period included with this release.

For detailed information on methods used to gather the data for the Labour Force Survey, see [Labour Statistics: Concepts, Sources and Methods \(/statistics/detailed-methodology-information/concepts-sources-methods/labour-statistics-concepts-sources-and-methods/2023/methods-four-pillars-labour-statistics/household-surveys/labour-force-survey\)](#).

## Note on International Classifications

The international classifications available in this dataset have been created by mapping entire categories between classifications on a one-to-one basis, rather than partial allocations (for example, the whole of an ANZSCO occupation to a single corresponding ISCO occupation). As a result, there may be very small differences to what the estimates would have been, had the Australian data been coded initially and directly to international classifications, this is particularly evident for the Armed Forces Occupations ISCO major group. However, this approach isn't expected to have any material bearing on any analysis of this data.

## Confidentiality features in TableBuilder

In accordance with the Census and Statistics Act 1905, all the data in TableBuilder are subjected to a confidentiality process before release. This confidentiality process is undertaken to avoid releasing information that may allow the identification of particular individuals, families, households, dwellings or businesses.

Processes used in TableBuilder to make records confidential include the following:

- perturbation of data
- table suppression.

## Perturbation effects

To minimise the risk of identifying individuals in aggregate statistics, a technique is used to randomly adjust cell values. This technique is called perturbation. Perturbation involves small random adjustments of the statistics and is considered the most satisfactory technique for avoiding the release of identifiable statistics while maximising the range of information that can be released. These adjustments have a negligible impact on the underlying pattern of the statistics.

The introduction of these random adjustments result in tables not adding up. As a result, randomly adjusted individual cells will be consistent across tables, but the totals in any table will not be the sum of the individual cell values. The size of the difference between summed cells and the relevant total will generally be very small.

Please be aware that the effects of perturbing the data may result in components being larger than their totals. This includes determining proportions.

## Table suppression

Some tables generated within TableBuilder may contain a substantial proportion of very low counts within cells (excluding cells that have counts of zero). When this occurs, all values within the table are suppressed in order to preserve confidentiality. The following error message below is displayed at the bottom of the table when table suppression has occurred:

ERROR: The table has been suppressed as it is too sparse

ERROR: table cell values have been suppressed

## Data item list

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LFS TableBuilder data item list - March 2026

[Download XLSX](#)

[633.78 KB]

[\(/statistics/microdata-tablebuilder/available-microdata-tablebuilder/labour-force-survey/LFS%20Tablebuilder%20Data%20Item%20List%20March%202026.xlsx\)]((/statistics/microdata-tablebuilder/available-microdata-tablebuilder/labour-force-survey/LFS%20Tablebuilder%20Data%20Item%20List%20March%202026.xlsx))

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## History of changes

### 19 March 2026

LFS TableBuilder was released on 19 March 2026 with the following updates:

- Addition of months September 2025 to January 2026
- Number of days worked data item added
- Changes to Worked on the weekend data item
- The option to calculate the mean for various continuous summary options is currently not available

23 October 2025 - Addition of months, May 2025 - August 2025

19 June 2025 - Addition of months, August 2024 - April 2025

18 March 2025 - First release, August 2006 - July 2024

